

What is claimed is:

1. Systems for providing a partitioned storage service, comprising  
  
at least two servers,  
  
a storage volume partitioned across the at least two servers, and  
  
5 at least two snapshot processes operating on respective ones of the at least two  
servers and capable of coordinating with other snapshot processes for generating  
state information representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume.
2. Systems according to claim 1, wherein  
  
the snapshot process includes a coordinating process for generating commands  
10 for coordinating at least one other snapshot process to generate state information  
representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume.
3. Systems according to claim 2, wherein  
  
the coordinating process includes a time-stamp process for time stamping a  
command to generate a snapshot process.
- 15 4. Systems according to claim 1, wherein  
  
the snapshot process includes a request control process for processing requests  
received by the respective server.
5. Systems according to claim 4, wherein

the request control process includes a suspend process for suspending processing of requests by the respective server.

6. Systems according to claim 4, wherein

the request control process includes a time-stamp process for time stamping requests received by the respective server.

7. Systems according to claim 1, wherein

the snapshot process includes process for analyzing suspended requests to determine requests received after a selected time.

8. Systems according to claim 1, further including

an archive process for employing the state information to create a copy of the storage volume.

9. Systems according to claim 1, further comprising

a plurality of storage volumes partitioned across the at least two servers.

10. A process for providing a partitioned storage service, comprising the steps of

providing at least two servers and a storage volume partitioned across the at least two servers, and

operating at least two snapshot processes on respective ones of the at least two servers and capable of coordinating with other snapshot processes for generating

state information representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume.

11. A process according to claim 10, including  
  
coordinating at least one other snapshot process to generate state information  
  
representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume.
- 5 12. A process according to claim 11, wherein  
  
coordinating includes time-stamping a command to generate a snapshot process.
13. A process according to claim 10, wherein operating a snapshot process includes  
  
operating a request control process for processing requests received by the  
  
respective server.
- 10 14. A process according to claim 13, wherein  
  
the request control process includes a suspend process for suspending processing  
  
of requests by the respective server.
- 15 15. A process according to claim 13, wherein  
  
the request control process time stamps requests received by the respective  
  
server.
16. A process according to claim 13, further including  
  
analyzing suspended requests to determine requests received after a selected  
  
time.

17. A process for generating a snapshot of a storage volume distributed across at least two servers, comprising
- executing snapshot processes on respective ones of the at least two servers,
- providing an administration command to a first one of the snapshot processes
- 5 directing the snapshot processes to generate state information representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume,
- having the first snapshot process hold pending requests and direct at least a second snapshot process to hold pending client requests,
- having the second snapshot process to indicate that requests have been held, and
- 10 having the first snapshot process generate state information representative of the state of a storage partition maintained on its respective server and generate a snapshot command for the second server to generate information representative of the state of a storage partition maintained on its respective server.
18. A process according to claim 17, wherein
- 15 the administration command includes a prepare command to a second server supporting the data volume for which a snapshot is being created.
19. A process according to claim 17, further comprising
- processing the state information to generate an archive copy of the storage volume.

20. A process according to claim 17, further comprising  
having the first and second snapshot processes release pending requests after  
generating the state information.
21. A storage area network, comprising  
5 a data network having at least two servers,  
a storage volume partitioned across the at least two servers, and  
at least two snapshot processes operating on respective ones of the at least two  
servers and capable of coordinating with other snapshot processes for generating  
state information representative of the state of the partitioned storage volume.